

## Walking with God in the Fields.

### A SPRING-TIME HOMILY.

Lord God walking in the Garden in the cool of the day."

He walks with men in His garden, and we see Jesus with His disciples in the corn field on the Sabbath day. This time has no fear of His Creator, no dread of hiding from His voice, in the new and better liberty, the children can walk and talk in confidence with Him.

As we pause to contemplate the things, many and varied are the things that break forth from it. The Architect and Master Builder, One who had laid the foundations of the earth, and who had created the world in righteousness, here in it the dwelling-place of His walks forth with man, His nature, to enjoy and contemplate the glorious things that He had made, and to behold the works of His fingers.

Can nature recognize her Lord? We do not almost see the stately sun bending its head like Joseph's slaves in humble obedience to its master, and the tender dove-note of the morning, as they lift their heads and upon their cups that the petals within may bask in the sun of His smile, who had lighted that sun whose very light and created the color and the perfume that makes them beautiful, and which makes it income to adorn and bless His pathway. Surely the sun of the earth was glad that morning when He who had created all, walked forth as man to call from man's contentious hand the sustenance that His numbered needed, the waters of the field rejoiced, and the birds in the heaven sang with gladness and more rapturous melody. These simple fishermen, too, that bowed Him, how would their hearts revel in the glorious Judean summer sun, and breathe the calm influences of nature's smile, their ears were ravished and their hearts lulled at the gracious words of comfort and reproof that fell from His glowing lips. Yes, more, indeed, though perhaps unconscious of the light and liberty that flowed in His presence, forgetting the types and formalism and traditions which had preceded Him the first type, they suffered their hunger with growing grain, fulfilling the prophecy that their act and deed, that when the True God should have come the types and shadows would be done away. Should the children of the Bridegroom fast when the Bridegroom was with them? They lay bound when He, the Source of all liberty, was present to set them free? They did eat and were filled, and the fruit of all good blessed and sanctified of God.

Of course formalism and tradition were abolished, the rigorous, over much and zealous over much with uplifted hands set out against the sacrilege and called rebuke against those that gave the

scandal, and did that which was not lawful on the Sabbath day. But He whose acceptable service proceeds from the servants heart, and not from the hands and lips alone rebuked the murderers, and showed how those that had looked into the perfect law of liberty were no longer bound by old tradition, and that mercy before sacrifice was honored of Him. As if he had said, that acts of mercy and deeds that brought honor to Him, He would always prefer before positive institutions, and although they might clash with ceremonial they were of love, which is the end of all.

to keep him busy in the contemplation of that Father who made them all. The changing seasons, the heats and colds, the peaceful calms and the passing storms, are ever an open book to remind him of his Creator, and His kindly providence, and they are beautiful because beauty is God's handwriting, and a wayside sacrament. We welcome it in every fair face, in every fair sky, in every fair flower, and we thank for it, Him the fountain of all loveliness and drink it in simply and earnestly with all our eyes—it is a charmed draught, a cup of blessing. And why does God wish us to enjoy and love beautiful things here?

footfalls, we certainly hear its voice. How still the meadows are! How pure and free the vault of deep blue sky, and as we regard it we look and sigh again. "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove for then would I flee away and be at rest." It is then we know and realize that payer meadows and bluer skies await us in this world to come—that fairy land made real "the new heavens and the new earth" which God has prepared for the pure and the loving, the just and the brave, who made strong in His strength have conquered in the sore fight of life.

It is a fact for which we need to be devoutly thankful, that souls filled with grace and love, and hearts made white in Jesus' blood can walk with Jesus here in the natural corn fields, in the solemn quietude of nature's Sabbath, and though it may be contrary to form and tradition, and against rule and precedent of man's making, we can pluck the ears by the wayside, the ears of man, though, of divine aspiration, of the sanctified fruits of the Spirit of God that shall nourish and sustain the soul, and if we draw in by the ear and eye the teachings of God in His great open picture-book, it shall beget in us a hunger for the Eternal Bread that perisheth not.

The heart that is touched and has been changed by the Grace of God, sees these things in a new and brighter light; those who have been uplifted by the joys of God's great Salvation delight to walk with Him in the garden in the cool of the day; and the nearer man approaches to God the more he hears of Him and the deeper he drinks in of the Eternal word, the more he sees of Him in nature and the more he delights to contemplate Him in the beautiful world He has made for His children's enjoyment.

We hear a good deal at these times of elevating the minds and tastes and aspirations of the people. In this, our Dominion, we are told we lack the pictures and the poetry and the galleries and museums, to which our poorer and more hardworking brothers and sisters could come for enlightenment and culture. This may be true in a degree, but the heart is not a matter how lowly, and neither how little of sentiment and poetry there may be in its hard hard toil and the meanness of its daily surroundings, that is warmed and enlightened by the Spirit of God can see and perceive more, see, in the great open gallery of God's creation, the real true light and culture and poetry and beauty of which all these other things are but crude and halting imitations. The dazzling waters of the lake sleeping in the sun, the clear rising and boiling down in one ever sliding sheet of transparent silver, the birds bursting into song and mating and toying in every bush, he sees all these and everything stirred with the gleam of God's eyes, "when He reneweth the face of the earth." These things lead him out of self and out of sorrow towards the better home beyond.

Butly bend the flowers  
Down after bending hours  
In the meadows come you again,  
Little birds are all  
That I shall be able to  
But when morning dawns  
These songs are sweet and new.



IN THE CORN FIELD.

But the lesson of that Sabbath country walk which comes most home to us when as at this season, nature puts on her Easter wreath and the spring time proclaims that the time of the singing birds has come again, is the fact that all these things were made for man, and not man for them. This beautiful world which God has given to us, and which to the man who has come to God's terms, is but the vestibule of the brighter world within the veil, was made, glorious and beautiful for man's enjoyment; every tree, every flower, every bird and every babbling brook filled with the music of God's voice, and beautiful is the reflection of His smile was given to man fully and freely to enjoy and

because He intends hereafter to give us our fill of them. Mountain peaks, blushing sunsets with broad woodlands spreading out below, a walk through cornfields or green meadows under cool meadow shades and overhanging rocks, by rushing brooks we watch and watch until we hear the foam whisper and the fishes leap and the hard worn heart wanders out free beyond the grim world of business and earthly surroundings into the world of beautiful things—the world that shall be hereafter. Aye! that shall be; we believe it, and know that we too shall some day have our share of beauty. Does He not come in such hours as these and walk with us over the face of nature, we almost hear His





















